7: Lineva B-5 (no date)1893 RFl Great Russia RFl

marriage by hiding herself and wailing for the loss of her maiden freedom and for her transfer to a strange family, and if she wishes to particularly honor the guest, she will do this, not only at the first visit, but also at every one that follows. The groom does not gain any new rights by the betrothal, and does not come to the house to see his bride; the most he can do is to come to the window, bringing cakes and candy, and talk to her from the outside, in the evenings. About two nights before the wedding, the maidens have a party, at which they try on the bridal dresses, help to finish the outfit, etc., singing at the same time doleful songs; deploring her hard fate of having to leave home and go among strangers to live. On the eve of the wedding there is another party, to which the young men are admitted. The maidens take leave of their playmate, who is going to bear the cares, hard work and responsibilities of a married woman; the men agree upon the order in which they will go in the wedding procession, and arrange about the outfit of sleighs, horses, bells, ornaments, etc. Meantime, of course, refreshments are served and songs sung. 584

In the marriage ceremonies themselves, are to be seen remains of many ancient social customs, and we may call attention to the changes in the life of a girl which they represent:

1. The meeting bears at first the character of the usual girls' social gatherings—*possidelky*, in this way depicting her previous easy life at home, free from care.

2. Enter the *svats*, who with ceremonies, sit down on the bench under the principal beam of the ceiling. They conduct the negotiations. The bride treats them to a glass of brandy, and gives expression to her consent by tying a towel around the arm of the *svat*.

3. The bride is preparing for the wedding. The *svat* and the other male guests are driven out of the room, with noise and jokes. The hair of the bride is combed and made up for the last time, into the single, free-hanging braid of a girl. This action can be seen in the picture of Makovsky, "The Dressing of the Bride," in the Russian section of the Art Palace, at the Columbian Exposition; only the scene and time refer to a wedding amongst Boyars, about 200 years ago. 585 [302]

7: Lineva B-5 (no date)1893 RF1 Great Russia RF1

from such a young man (naming him) have come to ask for her. If she likes him, she ought to answer the *svats* and treat them to something. The girl throws a towel over her shoulder, puts a glass of brandy upon a plate and brings it to the *svat*, he accepts it with thanks, but before drinking asks her what answer he shall take to young so and so. The girl blushes, but takes off the towel, and ties it around his left arm—which means her consent: the *svat* thanks her and drains his glass, while she sits down at the table and cries. The *svat* then rises, thanks the people of the house for the entertainment, and starts to leave. At this juncture, the other girls, the friends of the bride, surround him, mock and jeer him, pull him about, splash water on him, etc., at the same time singing a mocking song, "Matchmaker, you foolish matchmaker"—*svatoushka* (No. 23)[1]; this is to express their displeasure for depriving them of a companion. Finally the *svat* pacifies them by some small presents and is allowed to withdraw; the *svakha* (female matchmaker) remains behind and sends out all the men. The girls at the same time surround the bride, cover her head with a kerchief (in sign of her future dependence), commiserate her, and cry over her.

SCENE 4TH. *The Braiding of the Hair* (shown in the picture by Makovsky, "The Toilet of the Bride," in the Russian Section of the Art Palace). The *svakha* takes the bride by the hand and leads her to a chair in the middle of the room; she undoes the single braid, as worn by peasant girls, and combs it out, all the girl friends also come up one after the other and help to comb it, it is then put up again, for the *last time in her life*, into the single plait. The girls, meantime, depict in song the sorrow of separation from her family, the uncertain treatment awaiting her, etc. "A little duck"—*Outoushka* (No. 23)[2]. When the bride is dressed and her hair arranged, she is led to the table where she sits down with her younger brother by her side.

SCENE 5TH. A loud noise and stomping are heard approaching, and then a loud knocking at the door. On bidding them to come in, enter the groom, *droushka* (best man), and his friends. The bridegroom takes his place at the table by the bride, the others

[1] [See cat. 11b, p. 44 — Analyst]
[2] [See cat. 11b, p. 46; it should be no. 27 — Analyst]

7: Lineva B-5 (no date)1893 RF1 Great Russia RF1

svakha behind. The groom and the bride advance to his parents and salute them. The company sing a song of glorification. The young couple bow to the groom's parents, three times to each, kiss them and receive their benediction; then the bridal pair are led to the table, at which they sit down. The *droushka* takes the plate with bread and salt from the father and goes out of the room with it to the bride's house, to invite her parents to the feast. 585

SCENE 4TH. The *svakha* leads the bride away into another chamber, where she is to change her dress and rearrange her hair. The *svakha* takes the veil off the bride, undoes her hair, combs it and makes it up again into two braids, which she winds around the head and covers with a kerchief; this is the way the married women dress their hair. [302]

SCENE 5TH. The bride is again covered with the veil and the *svakha* leads her out to the company, places her next to the groom and then solemnly pulls off her veil. This is the turning point in the ceremony, and from this moment the bride ceases to be a girl before the world and assumes the status of a married woman.

Somebody raps at the door.

SCENE 6TH. Enter the *droushka* with the bride's parents, who are welcomed with great honors and led to places near the head of the table.

Setting of the table. The *droushka* directs all the ceremonies of the feast. He first calls upon the *svakha*, who represents the groom's mother, to take out of the oven whatever she has and to set it upon the table. The *svakha* tries to remove the oven lid, but cannot do so and asks for help. The *droushka* then directs his friends to help her, and with songs, indicating the difficulty of the work, the young men of the groom's party pull off the lid and draw out the pots, which they place upon the table; the songs accompanying these actions are: "*Doobinoushka*" (No. 19)[1] and "Bold Mustaches"—*Oussy* (No. 14).[2]

The Feast. The whole company sit down to the table (except the *droushka* who sees that every guest has plenty of everything), cross themselves, asking a blessing and fall to. After they have eaten for a while, the best man offers a glass of 585 574

1 [See cat. 116, p. 40 — Analyst]

2 [See cat. 116, pp. 37-38 — Analyst]